



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## AFFIRMATIVE

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Subject + Past Simple	Subject + Was/were + Present Participle
I You He She It We They	I You He She It We They

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## AFFIRMATIVE

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Subject + Past Simple	Subject + Was/were + Present Participle
I walked You walked He walked She walked It walked We walked They walked	I was walking You were walking He was walking She was walking It was walking We were walking They were walking

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## NEGATIVE

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Subject + Didn't + Infinitive	Subject + Wasn't/weren't + Present Participle
I You He She It We They	I You He She It We They

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## NEGATIVE

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Subject + Didn't + Infinitive	Subject + Wasn't/weren't + Present Participle
I didn't walk You didn't walk He didn't walk She didn't walk It didn't walk We didn't walk They didn't walk	I wasn't walking You weren't walking He wasn't walking She wasn't walking It was walking We weren't walking They weren't walking

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## QUESTIONS

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Question Word + Did + Subject + Infinitive	Question Word + Was/Were + Subject + Present Participle
I You He She It We They	I You He She It We They

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## QUESTIONS

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Question Word + Did + Subject + Infinitive	Question Word + Was/Were + Subject + Present Participle
Where did I walk? Where did you walk? Where did he walk? Where did she walk? Where did it walk? Where did we walk? Where did they walk?	Where was I walking? Where were you walking? Where was he walking? Where was she walking? Where was it walking? Where were we walking? Where were they walking?

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## SHORT RESPONSES

Past Simple		Past Continuous	
Yes, I	No, I	Yes, I	No, I
Yes, you	No, you	Yes, you	No, you
Yes, he	No, he	Yes, he	No, he
Yes, she	No, she	Yes, she	No, she
Yes, it	No, it	Yes, it	No, it
Yes, we	No, we	Yes, we	No, we
Yes, they	No, they	Yes, they	No, they



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## SHORT RESPONSES

Past Simple		Past Continuous	
Yes, I did Yes, you did Yes, he did Yes, she did Yes, it did Yes, we did Yes, they did	No, I didn't No, you didn't No, he didn't No, she didn't No, it didn't No, we didn't No, they didn't	Yes, I was Yes, you were Yes, he was Yes, she was Yes, it was Yes, we were Yes, they were	No, I wasn't No, you weren't No, he wasn't No, she wasn't No, it wasn't No, we weren't No, they weren't

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## Past Simple

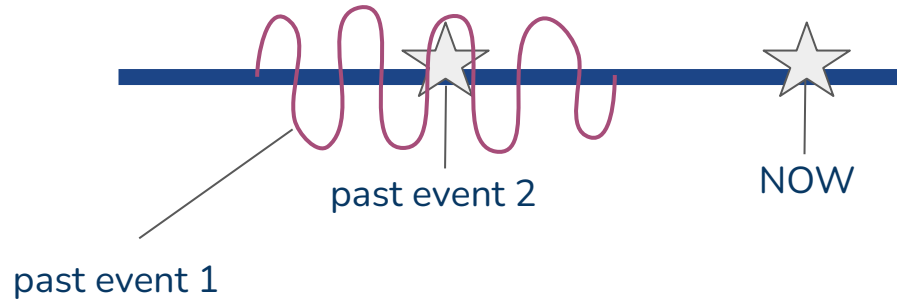


# Past Simple v Past Continuous

Past Simple Use	Example Sentences
Single past event	<i>I went to Mexico last summer</i>
Series of past events	<i>I woke up, got dressed, brushed my teeth, had breakfast</i>
Duration in the past	<i>I lived in Barcelona for 3 years</i>
Repeated past event	<i>I drove to work every day</i>
Changed state	<i>She was short as a child, but now she's tall</i>
Stative verbs	<i>I wanted a puppy</i>

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## Past Continuous



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

Past Continuous Use	Example Sentences
Before/ after structure	<i>It was 7pm and I was having dinner</i>
2 simultaneous actions	<i>I was cooking while he was watching TV</i>
Long past action	<i>It was raining all morning</i>
Setting the scene	<i>It was raining, the trees were blowing, the wind was howling ...</i>
Change and growth	<i>They were growing up so quickly</i>
Verb “to wonder”	<i>I was wondering if you’d like to go out with me?</i>

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

What is the difference in meaning?

Past Simple	Past Continuous
When I arrived, he did his homework	When I arrived, he was doing his homework

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

## Past Simple

When I arrived, he did his homework

## Past Continuous

When I arrived, he was doing his homework

The past simple tense tells us that the second event happens after the first event.



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

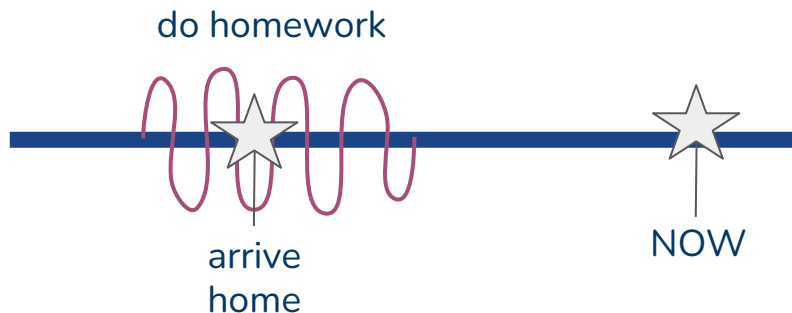
## Past Simple

When I arrived, he did his homework

## Past Continuous

When I arrived, he was doing his homework

The past continuous tense tells us that the two events happened at the same time.





# Past Simple v Past Continuous

What is the difference in meaning?

Past Simple	Past Continuous
At 8am, I left the house	At 8am, I was leaving the house

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

Past Simple	Past Continuous
At 8am, I left the house	At 8am, I was leaving the house

We use the past simple to talk about a specific time the event happened.



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

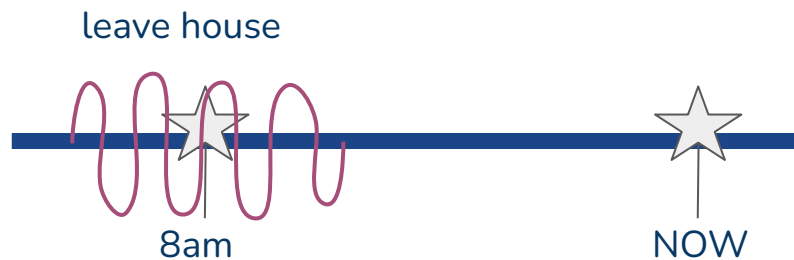
## Past Simple

At 8am, I left the house

## Past Continuous

At 8am, I was leaving the house

We use the past continuous to talk about an approximate time the event happened.



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

What is the difference in meaning?

Past Simple	Past Continuous
They grew so quickly	They were growing so quickly

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

Past Simple	Past Continuous
They grew so quickly	They were growing so quickly

The past simple focuses on the end result and compares the past change to the present.



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

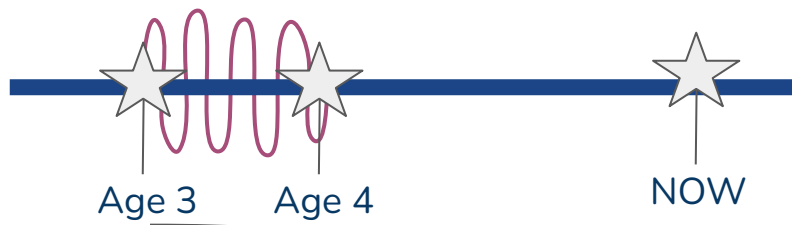
## Past Simple

They grew so quickly

## Past Continuous

They were growing so quickly

The past continuous focuses on comparing two past points together.



## Past Simple v Past Continuous

We cannot say “**I was needing a pen all morning chocolate**” because *need* is a stative verb.



Instead, we must use the past simple tense  
“**I needed a pen all morning**”.

Past Simple	Past Continuous
<p>Single past event <i>I went to Mexico last summer</i></p> <p><i>*A specific finished time</i></p>	<p>Before/after structure <i>It was 7pm and I was having dinner</i></p> <p><i>*An approximate time</i></p>
<p>Series of past events <i>I woke up, got dressed, had breakfast</i></p> <p><i>*Each action is finished before the next one</i></p>	<p>2 actions <i>I was cooking while he was watching TV</i></p> <p><i>*Two events could be happening at the same time</i></p>
<p>Past duration <i>I lived in Barcelona for 3 years</i></p>	<p>Long past action <i>It was raining all morning</i></p>
<p>Repeated past event <i>I drove to work every day</i></p>	<p>Setting the scene <i>It was raining, the trees were blowing, the wind was howling</i></p>
<p>Changed state <i>She was short as a child, but now she's tall</i></p> <p><i>*Past event compared to present</i></p>	<p>Change and growth <i>They were growing up so quickly</i></p> <p><i>*Two past events compared</i></p>
<p>Stative verbs <i>I wanted a puppy</i></p>	<p>Verb "to wonder" <i>I was wondering if you'd like a coffee?</i></p>



# Past Simple v Past Continuous

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Ago Yesterday In Once Last Then This When	While As All From ... to Through For

# Past Simple v Past Continuous



We were driving to school every day.

# Past Simple v Past Continuous



**We were driving to school every day**

Habits and regular activities that no longer happen should use the past simple tense instead.

# Past Simple v Past Continuous



We drove to school  
every day



# Past Simple v Past Continuous



I was cooking when he was arriving

# Past Simple v Past Continuous



**I was cooking when he was arriving**

Many English learners mix up the tenses with “when” and “while”. When uses the past simple and while uses the past continuous.

# Past Simple v Past Continuous



I was cooking when he arrived

I was cooking while he was arriving



# Past Simple v Past Continuous



I didn't swimming in the sea



# Past Simple v Past Continuous



I didn't swimming in the sea

English learners tend to mix up the auxiliary verbs in these sentences, especially in the negative forms.

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

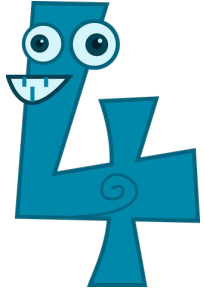


I didn't swim in the sea

I wasn't swimming in the  
sea



# Past Simple v Past Continuous



She was cleaning while I was walking in

# Past Simple v Past Continuous

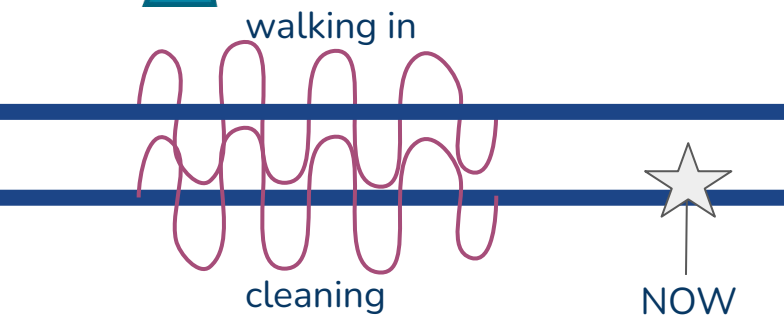


**She was cleaning while I was walking in**

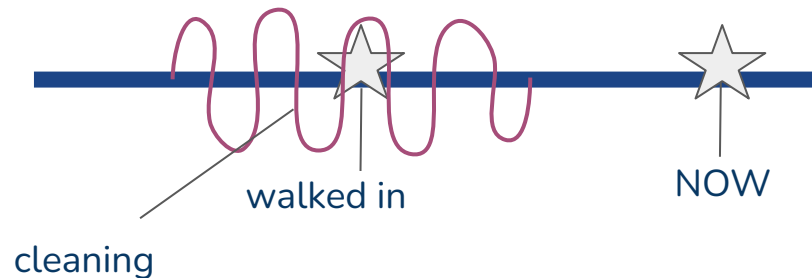
When two events happen in the past, it's essential to use the correct tenses to express the correct timeline.



# Past Simple v Past Continuous



She was cleaning while I  
was walking in



she was cleaning  
when I walked in



# Past Simple v Past Continuous



She cleaned while I was  
walking in



when she cleaned, I walked in



# Practice 1

You are caught in the act. Explain why you were doing this and tell the story using the past simple and past continuous tenses.

<https://virtually-fluent.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/19-Past-Simple-v-Past-Continuous-Self-Study-Liar-Liar.pdf>



# Practice 2

Finish the sentence using at least one more sentence.

<https://virtually-fluent.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/26-Past-Continuous-Self-Study-Finish-The-Sentence-Flashcards.pdf>



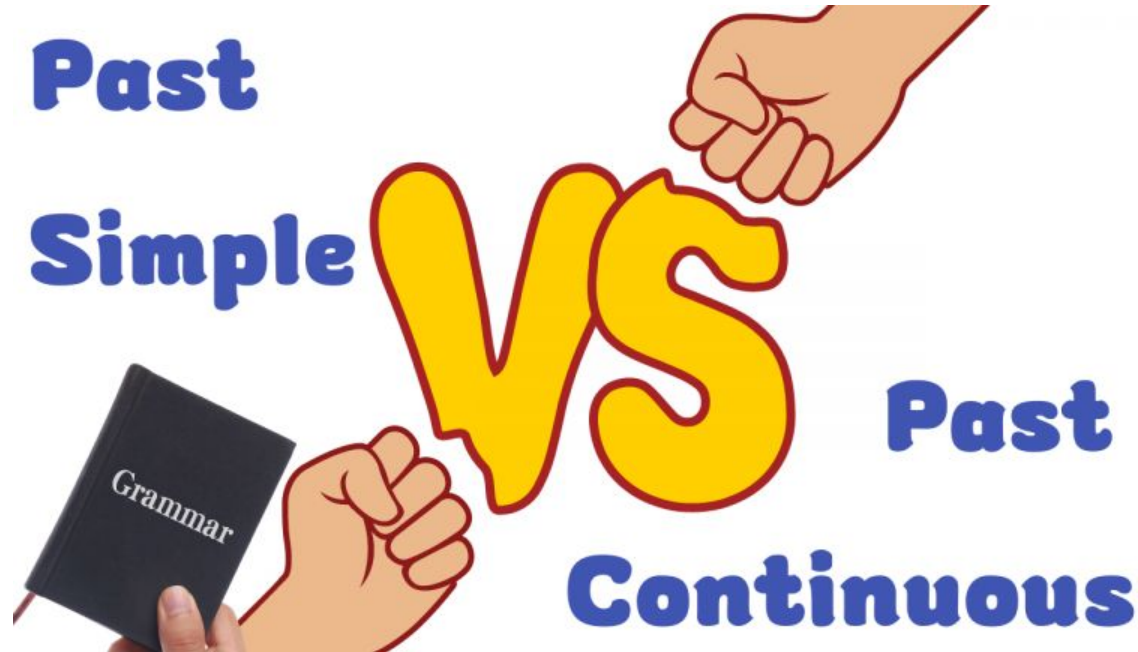


# Practice 3

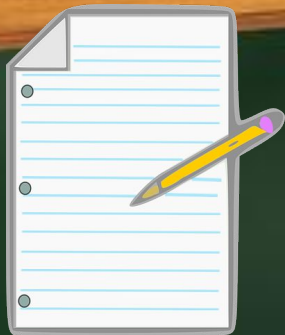
It's conversation time!

<https://virtually-fluent.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/11-Past-Simple-v-Past-Continuous-Conversation-Questions.pdf>

# REVIEW



Past Simple v Past Continuous



# HOMEWORK

## COMPLETE THE QUIZ

Link:

<https://virtually-fluent.com/quizzes/past-simple-v-past-continuous-quiz/>